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SUBJECT: IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER WELCOMES PRESIDENT'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS  
PLEDGE

11. In an April 6 statement following the informal U.S.-EU Summit in Prague, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Micheal Martin, welcomed President Obama's commitment to work towards a world without nuclear weapons, a central aim of Irish foreign policy for over fifty years.

Martin said Ireland's highest priority in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation is to strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). He welcomed the U.S. commitment to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and to strengthen the NPT. President Obama's statement was also lauded by the Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Its Chairman, David Hutchinson Edgar, said the President's comments marked a welcome shift in U.S. government attitudes.

12. Begin text of Minister Martin's remarks.

I am greatly encouraged by the renewed focus placed on nuclear disarmament by President Obama in his major speech in Prague yesterday and in his joint statements with Russian President Medvedev last week. He is right to recognise that the vital efforts to curb nuclear proliferation will be greatly strengthened by a parallel demonstration of good faith by those who now hold nuclear weapons. I am particularly pleased by President Obama's commitment to the immediate and aggressive pursuit of US ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the negotiation of a new treaty that verifiably ends the production of fissile materials intended for use in nuclear weapons. Ireland's highest priority in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation is to strengthen the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) and to ensure full respect for all its provisions. I am therefore heartened by President Obama's explicit commitment to strengthening the NPT. This offers real hope for the future.

Next year's NPT Review Conference will be a key test of the commitment of the United States and other Nuclear Weapons States. The stakes are high. Commitments undertaken by all NPT States in 1995 and 2000, but largely ignored since then, must be taken forward and fully implemented. Ireland will spare no effort in working with all States for an ambitious outcome to the 2010 Conference and progress towards the achievement of a nuclear weapons free world.

End text of Minister Martin's remarks.

FAUCHER